

November 25, 2019

Honorable Steve Marshall
Attorney General
State of Alabama
501 Washington Avenue
Montgomery, AL 36104

**RE: Investigation of Officer-Involved Shooting Death of Dana Sherrod Fletcher in
Madison, AL on October 27, 2019**

Attorney General Marshall:

On October 27, 2019, the Madison Police Department ("MPD") reportedly responded to a suspicious-person 911 call that resulted in an encounter with Dana Sherrod Fletcher, 39, that ended in his being shot to death by one or more police officers. The MPD claimed that Mr. Fletcher had possession of a .9mm gun that was recovered from his hand after his death, and that he was shot only after he had exited the vehicle and fully extended the gun toward an officer who was able to fire upon Mr. Fletcher first. The Madison County Sheriff's Department ("MCSD") purportedly conducted an investigation of the shooting and the 911 call as an independent third party. After making one or more factually inaccurate findings in an apparent effort to support the MPD's initial story, the MCSD later backtracked on some findings, like the type of gun allegedly recovered from Mr. Fletcher's possession, and ultimately identified an entirely different weapon by the end of its 3-week investigation.

The MCSD turned the case over to Madison County District Attorney Robert Broussard, who, within one day of having jurisdiction of the case, declared the killing justified on November 15, 2019. To support his conclusions, the D.A. held a press conference wherein he presented both a timeline and select photographs apparently taken from body cams and parking lot surveillance cameras that, after 3 weeks in police control, purported to show Mr. Fletcher holding a gun. The D.A. did not show any source video footage of Mr. Fletcher having possession of a gun. The findings made public by the MPD, MCSD, and D.A.'s office all conflict in some way with bystander video footage that has been posted online.

Aside from the irregularities in the local authorities' findings regarding Mr. Fletcher's death, other factors bring into reasonable question the fairness and impartiality of the investigations into this matter. The mayor of Madison is Paul Finley; the lead investigator on the Fletcher matter at the MCSD was Steve Finley. It is unclear whether these two individuals are related, but such a matter need not remain subject to public speculation. In a similar vein, the officers involved in the Fletcher shooting have never been identified, shielding from analysis whether any bias may have existed in their favor. Further, D.A. Broussard publicly has made statements that may be interpreted as providing blanket exoneration of police officers' interactions with people of color, apparently rejecting out of hand that race may play any role in any officer's perception of threat or use of force. "Broussard asks, 'Why don't you call it what it is which is 'mass criminality,' Broussard challenged. 'Why don't you call it that? Because law enforcement on the street has better things to do than to target a group of people. Instead, they respond to criminal activity.'"¹

[REDACTED]

These and other factors give rise to a reasonable perception that both the DA's office and the MCSD have a conflict that precludes them from conducting a fair and neutral investigation of the MPD's actions in the Fletcher matter. It is in everyone's interest for the facts to be determined by a process that is fair and free from bias or influence. That process has to be accomplished by someone of integrity who does not have a real or perceived conflict of interest. Consequently, we request that you, as the top law enforcement official in the State, conduct a review of this case to preserve the semblance of fairness in the legal system in Alabama.

Sincerely,

Alvord L Fletcher
Chelle L Fletcher
Rodiah M Fletcher
Shari Fletcher

The Fletcher Family

Concerned Citizens of Madison County